

Message Text

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63

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 SCS-03 SCA-01 DRC-01 RSC-01 /050 W
----- 079720

R 221050Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7293

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NDJAMENA 2221

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT CD

SUBJECT: CHAD: CURRENT STATUS CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

REF: NDJAMENA 2185

1. DURING TWO-HOUR SESSION DEC 20 WITH DR DAVID SEYMOUR, ONLY REMAINING MALE BAPTIST MISSIONARY IN SOUTH OF CHAD, EMBOFF (HESTER) AND I OBTAINED FULL UNDERSTANDING PRESENT ATMOSPHERE AS WELL AS BACKGROUND OF CURRENT TROUBLES AFFECTING BAPTISTS AND POTENTIALLY OTHER PROTESTANT GROUPS IN SARA TRIBAL AREA. DETAILS BEING TRANSMITTED IN MEMCON.

2. SEYMOUR FLEW TO N'DJAMENA DEC 20 AND RETURNED DEC 21. PURPOSES WERE (A) REPORT CURRENT SITUATION TO EMBASSY AND (B) TELEPHONE MID-BAPTIST CLEVELAND HEADQUARTERS TO PROTEST ORDERS TO LEAVE CHAD. SEYMOUR SPOKE WITH GENSEC BUCK WHO AGREED VISIT CHAD MID-JANUARY AND AUTHORIZED SEYMOUR, HIS WIFE AND FOUR NURSES TO REMAIN AT KOUMRA MISSION UNTIL THEN IF THEY CONSIDER THEIR POSITION TENABLE. AFTER HEARING SEYMOUR'S DESCRIPTION OF PRESENT SITUATION AND LEARNING HIS MEDICAL WORK AND MINOR PREACHING ACTIVITIES ARE PROCEEDING ALMOST NORMALLY WE ENDORSE THIS DECISION.

3. FROM THIS TALK WITH SEYMOUR AND MEETING I HAD IN DOBA DEC 18 WITH AMERICAN PENTECOSTAL REP SANDERS, IT IS CLEAR THAT WHAT WE ARE WITNESSING IN CHAD IS TOMBALBAYE EFFORT TO
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EMULATE HIS CURRENT MENTOR MOBUTU'S CAMPAIGN TO FORCE

ESTABLISHMENT OF "HOMOGENIZED" PROTESTANT CHURCH RUN BY AND FOR AFRICANS, CHURCH WHICH CAN BE BANKED UPON TO OFFER NO OPPOSITION TO REVIVAL OF "PAGAN" INITIATION RITES AND OTHER "AUTHENTIC" CHADIAN (READ SARH) CUSTOMS. TWO CHADIAN PASTORS WHO HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED TO "ADMINISTER" ALL BAPTIST CHURCHES ARE RENEGADE MEMBERS OF PENTECOSTALS WHO BACKED TOMBALBAYE TWENTY YEARS AGO WHEN ALL OTHER PROTESTANT CLERGY LOOK WITH SUSPICION ON HIS EARLY POLITICAL ACTIVITIES AND CONDEMNED HIM FOR HIS SECOND AND THIRD MARRIAGES. WHILE SANDERS SAID EXISTING MAINLINE PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES HAVE NOT BEEN BOTHERED YET, HE BELIEVES IT "ONLY MATTER OF TIME" BEFORE THESE TWO TOMBALBAYE-BLESSED PASTORS ZERO IN ON THEM. SEYMOUR PREDICTS STRONG OPPOSITION TO TOMBALBAYE MOVES WHEN TAKE-OVER OF BETTER ORGANIZED AND MORE MILITANT CHURCHES IN MOUNDOU AREA IS ATTEMPTED.

4. FROM THESE TALKS AND DISCUSSION DEC 20 WITH APOSTOLIC DELEGATE TAGLIAFERRI (BASED IN BANGUI) IT CLEAR CATHOLICS HAVE DECIDED TO ROLL WITH PUNCH, CHALKING "YONDOH" UP TO CIVIC CEREMONY, COMETHING IN CAESAR'S REALM.

5. INTERESTING QUESTION NOW EMERGING IS HOW TRANSFERABLE WILL TOMBALBAYE'S NEW LOOK BE WHEN EFFORT IS MADE TO EXTEND AUTHENTICITY FROM HIS OWN SARA TRIBE TO OTHERS IN SOUTH.

6. I HAVE SOUGHT APPOINTMENT WITH PRESIDENT FOR TOUR D'HORIZON BUT INTEND ALSO RAISE MISSIONARY ISSUE WITH HIM.
MULCAHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CITIZEN PROTECTION, MISSIONARIES, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS, RELIGIOUS GROUPS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973NDJAME02221
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NDJAMENA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973128/aaaaafxt.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: NDJAMENA 2185
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08-Jan-2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <25-Jan-2002 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHAD: CURRENT STATUS CHRISTIAN MISSIONS
TAGS: PINT, CD
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005